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NSC BRIEFING

THE DETERIORATING SITUATION IN SYRIA

I. Government's Ineffectiveness:

A. Weak coalition, caretaker cabinet;
unable set election date.

B. Major political parties, though still
in cabinet, pulling apart.

II. Possibility of a Coup as Result of Governmental Weakness:

A. Threat of leftist-military coup:

1. Comes from radical socialist groups
Kawasaki and military partisans.
allegedly 300-400 army officers out
of estimated 2000.

B. Threat of straight military coup:

1. Because of army dissatisfaction with
civilian control.

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS.

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2. Possible rebels: popular, influential
assistant chief of staff Malki;

[redacted] Captain Hamdi,

armored brigade commander Amin Abu
Assaf.

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III. Outlook:

A. Immediate successful coup possible but
not probable.

B. More likely, the situation will continue
to deteriorate, increasing probability
of a coup.

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